



Written Testimony of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society

HB 5534 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF NATUROPATHY

Public Health Committee – March 7, 2016

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and distinguished Members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the more than 200 orthopaedic surgeons of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to **HB 5534 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF NATUROPATHY**

This bill not only expands the scope of practice of Naturopaths, to include prescribing authority, but it also adds a new level of licensure for Naturopaths with no formal scope review process by the Department of Public Health.

The proposed bill would allow prescribing authority with minimal hours of pharmaceutical training which does not include additional education for a solid understanding of the entire physiology of the body and all consequences of prescription drugs. There are many pharmaceuticals, which can have life threatening side effects, when prescribed to patients with certain conditions. For example, prescribing a simple anti-inflammatory to a diabetic patient could put them in renal failure and lead to death.

Prescribing a beta blocker to an asthmatic, could cause respiratory distress and death. This prescribing authority should not be granted as it would jeopardize the health of patients, add to the cost of healthcare for CT residents without any evidence that an access issue exists or if it would improve patient care.

There are no provisions in the bill for a formal licensure process and separate requirements to certify "advanced naturopaths". Like APRNs and other nursing specialties, the State of Connecticut has licensure applications with criteria specific to the education and training required to be licensed in our state. Simply changing a statute for new classification without formal state licensing procedures would allow any naturopath to classify and promote themselves as advanced practitioners, creating the potential to confuse and/or mislead the health care consumer.

On behalf of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, thank you for the opportunity to express our collective concerns and our strong opposition to this bill. We ask that the Committee continue to safeguard Connecticut citizens by voting no to scope expansion and unwarranted request to prescribe drugs by naturopaths in Connecticut.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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